



For Immediate Release

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Illinois Philharmonic Orchestra Celebrates the Beginning of the Holiday Season with the Timeless Classic Handel's *Messiah*

PARK FOREST, November 30, 2018

Illinois Philharmonic Orchestra (IPO) brings the holiday spirit to the Southland with its upcoming performance of Handel's *Messiah* with the Elmhurst Choral Union and four special guest soloists on December 8, 2018 at 3pm at Ozinga Chapel at Trinity Christian College.

Maestro Stilian Kirov leads the orchestra, as well as the Elmhurst Choral Union and guest soloists, Emily Birsan - Soprano, Annie Rosen - Mezzo Soprano, Eric Ferring-Tenor, and Bill McMurray - Bass, through a heavenly rendition of Handel's full *Messiah*. Rosen was a 2017 graduate of the Ryan Opera Center at the Lyric Opera of Chicago, and Ferring is a current member of the Ensemble of the Ryan Opera Center.

George Frideric Handel composed *Messiah* in a frantic span of twenty-four days during 1741. The work is beloved by many in our modern times. Believing *Messiah* stands the test of time, Kirov states, "The piece is monumental with its inspirational beauty and artistic integrity. Apart from being brilliantly composed, the biblical subject adds an exciting meaning to the extraordinary musical content."

One of the most iconic and well-known movements of *Messiah* is the "Hallelujah" Chorus. Kirov explains, "The whole *Messiah* is a masterpiece. I feel that every movement carries this extraordinary spirituality, especially the "Hallelujah" Chorus." After IPO concludes the full composition, the audience is invited to participate in the Encore of the "Hallelujah" Chorus and share the holiday celebration together.

Kirov brings forth boundless anticipation and enthusiasm to this upcoming performance. "I am hopeful that we will be able to present an exciting, inspiring, yet fresh approach to this immortal music and a wonderful beginning to the holiday season."

Messiah is sponsored in part by Ozinga Foundation and Illinois Arts Council Agency.

Concert single tickets start at \$27 in advance. Student tickets are \$10, and group tickets are available with a minimum of seven patrons. Ticketing fees may apply. Great new subscriber rates of up to 40% off are still available for 3, 4, or all 5 concert packages.

To order, or for more information, visit ipomusic.org or call 708.481.7774. Ozinga Chapel is located at 6601 W. College Drive on the campus of Trinity Christian College in Palos Heights. The IPO Ozinga Chapel box office opens one hour before the performance on concert night.

ABOUT THE ILLINOIS PHILHARMONIC ORCHESTRA

Illinois Philharmonic Orchestra is celebrating its 41st Season in 2018-19. From its community orchestra roots in Park Forest, the 69-member orchestra has grown into a critically acclaimed professional regional orchestra.

Under the leadership of Music Director Stilian Kirov and Executive Director Christina Salerno, the mission of IPO is to provide concerts of compelling professional symphonic music, support music education, and expand audience awareness of musical excellence for the diverse communities of the greater Chicago region.

During the 2018-19 season, IPO will perform seven classical concerts at their venue, Ozinga Chapel at Trinity Christian College in Palos Heights. In addition, the orchestra performs four educational youth concerts each year, serving over 4,000 students in the Chicago Southland, and a summer chamber series, IPO @ Ravisloe Golf Club.

Illinois Philharmonic Orchestra is supported in part by: Bimba/IMI Precision Engineering, Gaylord and Dorothy Donnelly Foundation, Ozinga Foundation, and the Illinois Arts Council Agency.

For more information, visit ipomusic.org or call 708.481.7774.

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